The Unitarian Calendar

The music of the soul can ne'er be mute,
What though the brazen clang of antique form
Stop for a hundred years the angel's lute?
The angel smiles, and when the deafening storm
Has pealed along the age, he sings again,
Clearer and sweeter, like the sunshine after rain.

—C. P. Cranch.

Vol. 4 NOVEMBER — 1911 No. 3

OUR NATIONAL SOCIETIES

With headquarters in the building of the American Unitarian Association, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

Local offices at 104 East 20th Street, New York City; 105 South Dearborn Street, Chicago, Ill., and 376 Sutter Street, San Francisco, Cal.

THE AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION

Founded in 1825.

The chief missionary organization of the Unitarian churches of America. It supports missionaries, establishes and maintains churches, holds conventions, aids in building meeting-houses, publishes books, tracts, and devotional works.

Address correspondence to the Secretary Rev. Lewis G. Wilson.

Address contributions to the Treasurer, Hon. George Hutchinson.

UNITARIAN SUNDAY-SCHOOL SOCIETY

Founded in 1827.

Maintained by the Unitarian churches to promote religious and moral education. Publishes manuals and tracts, issues a Sunday-school paper, holds conventions, carries on a book-room. Branch at 105 South Dearborn Street, Chicago.

Address correspondence to the President, Rev. William I. Lawrance.

Address contributions to the Treasurer, Mr. John H. Edwards.

NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF UNITARIAN WOMEN

Organized in 1890.

Promotes the local organization of the women of the Unitarian churches for missionary and denominational work.

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YOUNG PEOPLE'S RELIGIOUS UNION

Organized in 1896.

Promotes the organization of the young people of the Unitarian churches for "Truth, Worship, and Service."

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Organized in 1909.

Promotes an increasing participation in the works of the local churches and in the affairs of the denomination at large.

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President, John Mason Little.

Vice-Presidents, Hon. Horace Davis, LL.D. and Mr. M. T. Garvin.

Address correspondence to the Secretary and Treasurer, Mr. Cyril H. Burdett, 135 Broadway, New York City.

The Unitarian Calendar

Vol. 4 NOVEMBER, 1911. No. 3

WHAT IS MOST PRACTICAL IN CHURCH WORK

REV. JOHN W. DAY

Of the Church of the Messiah, St. Louis, Mo.

In the rooms of many golf clubs, there is posted a sign which reads: "Direction first, distance afterwards." One does not need to play golf to see the point. Players who hit the ball hardest and send it farthest are not thereby the best players. Their mighty stroke may pull the ball off the course, and all its merit be turned to disadvantage. They think first of the distance they will reach, while someone who is careful of the aim, and makes every inch tell for the hole, will not make half so brilliant a stroke, and yet will be surer to win. The sense of direction takes longest to train, the use of power comes nearest desire. But without the sense of direction, power achieves nothing. After the sense of direction is gained, then only will energy reach its end.

Something like this would make a good church motto. How can churches, as such, and their members, do the most good for the world? First by getting their sense of direction clear, choosing the thing really to be aimed at, and then by making every effort tell in that direction. Grand purposes and splendid energies amount to nothing when they are expended mainly for the sake of exhibition, or turned loose almost anywhere. Visions become visionary the moment they are

pursued as visions. The vision furnishes the impulse, and the object of it; but no enthusiasm avails that is not governed by a prudent regard for the shortest distance between two points. If we wanted to diminish the usefulness of churches we could hardly go about it in a surer way than by exhorting them to a grand advance into the air. One chosen direction is more to the purpose than fifty essayed at once. The direction with some actual relation to the problems of the particular community in which the church is located, and to the resources of the church in membership and availability, is likely to do more for the kingdom of God than all the pyrotechnics of resolutions and covenants. Churches may find their specialties, may develop new occasions for them, may discover intensive methods of spiritual agriculture, may direct their members in this way and that, according to individual endowments and capabilities, and thus quietly be doing the full work of a church in the world, which their earnest critics overlook. Many of our churches are well known in their places to be doing such effective work. They need not be depressed at hearing zealous men impute to them an indifference to the immediate claims of a millennium. Again, to use the golfer's vocabulary, the short game, that is straight, will win over the long game, that is erratic.

For when once the social conscience is aroused,
"Pity, like a naked new-born babe,
Striding the blast, or heaven's cherubim, horsed
Upon the sightless couriers of the air,
Shall blow the horrid deed in every eye,
That tears shall drown the wind."

—*Shakespeare.*

THE GREATER UNITY

REV. F. M. BENNETT

Of the Unitarian Society, Lawrence, Kansas.

Out of the contacts and conflicts of convic-ons the higher truth issues. If we give it a hance the greater harmony will be heard. It akes more than one instrument to make an or-hestra, and each instrument must be played with reat skill if the music is to be worthy. Even o, if we look for the unities in life and religion, e must expect them to issue from the free ontact of thought and feeling and will in hu-an souls. The real unities spring not from sys-ems of authority and repression, not from at-empts to reduce all to one dead level of thought nd effort. The real unities of life spring from he free expression of that which is dearest to he human soul. The divine harmony of religion s that which is alive and free, which gives voice o all the possibilities of life.

If we would be effective souls we should trive to gain a worthy philosophy, and having gained it, to live it. We should each be a worthy expression of the life of God. We should find our tasks and perform them in gladness. Each one should expect much from himself, and he should expect much of his brother also. We must count on growth in life and religion, and hold ourselves ready to be the living instruments of the purposes of divinity. Only as we do so shall the greater truth and the more beautiful harmony of the divine life appear among men.

O what is heaven but the fellowship
Of minds that each can stand against the world
By its own meek and incorruptible will!

—*Emerson.*

"O Joy! infinite sweetness! with what flowers
And shoots of glory my soul breaks and buds!
All the long hours
Of night and rest,
Through the still shrouds
Of sleep and clouds,
This dew fell on my breast;
O how it bloods
And spirits all my earth! Hark! in what rings
And hymning circulations the quick world
Awakes and sings!
The rising winds
And falling springs,
Birds, beasts, all things,
Adore Him in their kinds.
Thus all is hurled
In sacred hymns and order, the great chime
And symphony of Nature. Prayer is
The world in tune,
A spirit-voice
And vocal joys
Whose echo is heaven's bliss."

—*Vaughan.*

There is no sort of wrong deed of which a man can bear the punishment alone. We cannot isolate ourselves, and say that the evil which is in us shall not spread. Our deeds are like children that are born to us; they live and act apart from our own will. —*George Eliot.*

But rich men are, for the most part, grown to that dotage, through their pride in their wealth, as though there were no accident could end it, or their life. —*John Smith* (1579-1632).

THE "BIG" THING

In view of the insatiable craving of the people for what is big, unexpected and unheard of, and the unconscious assumption that anything to be worth noticing must be somehow big, it is with a feeling of relief that we go back to him who, probably better than any man who ever lived, was able to tell us something about intrinsic values.

It is worth our while to notice that statistics did not interest him, that sensations were repugnant to him, that over-statements and unnecessary reaffirmations were offensive.

Whatever may be meant by the "psychology of the crowd," it was something that did not appeal to him. If the multitude—the big thing—came where he was, it awakened within him a certain pathos. He saw it as a creature with illusions and fears and sundry frightful vices. It sought signs and wonders, the tricks of the sorcerer; and the morbid curiosity of superstition dominated it. He bore with it, fed it when it was hungry, healed its sick, comforted its sorrow-stricken members, cast out its devils and sent it away.

But he never sought the multitude when he wanted to indoctrinate the world with his great, germinal thoughts. He reached the moment when his wonderful *Testamentum*—his remarkable Declaration of Blessedness—was to be delivered. It was then that "seeing the multitude he went up into the mountain" (to get *away* from that same multitude) "and when he was sat down his disciples came unto him, and he taught them, saying."

When he uttered that prayer which has been the model of spiritual expression—he gave it unto the *twelve*.

Christianity in its beginning—whatever it

may have become in later years—was *intensive*. It had no dream of big things as such, but of true things and genuine things, and things that were to give character and strength to individual men and women.

Its object never was to make a great, boastful display. It had to find and appropriate pomp and glory in paganism. Its purpose was to heighten the quality of life and trust to the propagating power of goodness for its extension.

Probably no statement and illustration of religion ever laid greater emphasis upon the simple values of the right life, and the complete sufficiency of righteousness, than did Christianity as the Nazarene stated and illustrated it.

AGNOSTICISM

REV. CHARLES T. BILLINGS

Of the First Unitarian Society, Lowell, Mass.

Unitarians believe agnosticism is a form of thought that is outgrown. For God is not unknowable. The whole world, and every object in the world, reveals Him. We look upon the ocean. We can never at any one time see it all. We may know little of its depths, or, only of its smile or frown, but all that we see suggests the part that is beyond our vision. We know the ocean is what we see but vaster. So in the star, the wave, the child, the man we see God, for what we see of God suggests the more that is beyond our vision's reach. We know the Divine Love is like our human love but vaster. And all that we see or know unfolds the nature of God, the Unseen and Eternal, who reveals Himself in infinite ways to the children of men.

CHRISTIANITY TO BE PURIFIED

To all who hear me I would say, with the Apostle, Prove all things, hold fast that which is good. Do not, brethren, shrink from the duty of searching God's word for yourselves, through fear of human censure and denunciation. Do not think that you may innocently follow the opinions which prevail around you, without investigation, on the ground that Christianity is now so purified from errors as to need no laborious research. There is much reason to believe that Christianity is at this moment dishonored by gross and cherished corruptions. If you remember the darkness which hung over the gospel for ages; if you consider the impure union which still subsists in almost every Christian country between the church and state, and which enlists men's selfishness and ambition on the side of established error; if you recollect in what degree the spirit of intolerance has checked free inquiry, not only before but since the Reformation; you will see that Christianity cannot have freed itself from all the human inventions which disfigured it under the Papal tyranny. No. Much stubble is yet to be burned; much rubbish to be removed; many gaudy decorations which a false taste has hung around Christianity must be swept away; and the earthborn fogs which have long shrouded it must be scattered, before this divine fabric will rise before us in its native and awful majesty, in its harmonious proportions, in its mild and celestial splendors.

—*William E. Channing.*

A man is sufficient for himself; yet ten men, united in love, were capable of being and of doing what ten thousand singly would fail in.

—*Carlyle.*

DR. HALE ON RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE

Dr. Hale once wrote to Dr. Starbuck, in answer to one of his circulars of inquiry regarding religious experience, as follows:

"I observe, with profound regret, the religious struggles which come into many biographies, as if almost essential to the formation of the hero. I ought to speak of these, to say that any man has an advantage, not to be estimated, who is born, as I was, into a family where the religion is simple and rational; who is trained in the theory of such a religion, so that he never knows, for an hour, what these religious or irreligious struggles are. I always knew God loved me, and I was always grateful to Him for the world He placed me in. I always liked to tell Him so, and was always glad to receive His suggestions to me. . . . I can remember perfectly that when I was coming to manhood, the half-philosophical novels of the time had a deal to say about the young men and maidens who were facing the 'problem of life.' I had no idea whatever what the problem of life was. To live with all my might seemed to me easy; to learn where there was so much to learn seemed pleasant and almost of course; to lend a hand, if one had a chance, natural; and if one did this, why, he enjoyed life because he could not help it, and without proving to himself that he ought to enjoy it. . . . A child who is early taught that he is God's child, that he may live and move and have his being in God, and that he has, therefore, infinite strength at hand for the conquering of any difficulty, will take life more easily, and probably will make more of it than one who is told that he is born the child of wrath and wholly incapable of good." —Quoted, *James' Varieties of Religious Experience,* p. 82.

UNITARIAN HYMN

One thought I have, my ample creed,
So deep it is and broad,
And equal to my every need,—
It is the thought of God.

Each morn unfolds some fresh surprise,
I feast at Life's full board;
And rising in my inner skies
Shines forth the thought of God.

At night my gladness is my prayer;
I drop my daily load,
And every care is pillowed there
Upon the thought of God.

I ask not far before to see,
But take in trust my road;
Life, death, and immortality
Are in my thought of God.

To this their secret strength they owed
The martyr's path who trod;
The fountains of their patience flowed
From out their thought of God.

Be still the light upon my way,
My pilgrim staff and rod,
My rest by night, my strength by day,
O blessed thought of God.

FREDERICK L. HOSMER.

In one God believe;
One sole eternal Godhead, of whose love
All Heaven is moved, Himself unmoved the while. —*Dante.*

REV. JAMES VILA BLAKE

Of the Church of All Souls, Evanston, Ill.

Amid these swelling doubts, these tossing, often stormy, seas of intellectual questionings, the comfort of the steadiness of true Faith is past uttering; nay, even it is necessary to the very health and good issue of the doubts and endeavors in the questioning spirit. For by this Faith we know that our doubts are not dangerous, and no ill can happen to us by the honesty of them, however we strive and strain in them. To be whelmed and thrown about in doubts, if all things were only whirlwinds and surges, and naught immovable anywhere, were only misery. But one can stand in peace and look forth serenely on any clouds and storms of doubts, whatever be the roaring and shaking, if he be fixed on a goodness and a truth which is absolute, immutable, turning on a centre deeper than doubt, not so much as trembling in any uproar. The Faith which is simply trust in the Universe, that the Universe, the Whole, is good, safe, truth-unfolding, right-keeping, not to be thwarted or swerved,—this Faith, to which I have argued must be added trust in one's own soul, that it is truth-helmed, and to explore may go forth uncertain only of the length of the voyage, but sure of a haven at last in whatever is true, which is whatever is best, beautiful, blessed,—this Faith, I say, is the immovable, unshaking, unquestionable thing on which standing we have a quiet eye and wholesome mind for all doubts. I have met somewhere the thoughtful remark that the essential thing in the Calvinistic dogma of Predestination is absolute assurance of safety—"a thought," says this writer, "which we must try to ground more firmly, but without which it is true that neither peace nor enduring activity is possible."

We can have this assurance of safety only when we dwell in this immovable place, this true Faith, where doubts cannot hustle and drive us, but only invite us, and open gates of thought.

OF WHAT USE IS RELIGION?

It does for us what the chart does for the navigating officer of a ship. In the chart the navigator has spread before him a plan of sea and land showing the good harbors, the safe courses and the dangerous rocks. So religion provides us with a plan wherein we may discern how safely and happily to steer our course across the sea of life.

Has not the Atlantic often been crossed without any chart and can we not live without any religion?

Yes, but the chances of shipwreck in each case are increased enormously.

Religion does much more than furnish us with a chart of the ocean of life. It leads us to a high place whence we can obtain strength, light, hope.

We are mistaken if we fancy we shall not need these things. However prosperous we may be, sorrow is sure to overtake us, and death will have to be faced. Then shall we desire earnestly the strength, light, hope, which religion alone can give.

When we appear before men as seekers after Good, and they say of us amongst themselves: These men are a living religion,—thinkest thou our appeal to the peoples will not meet with a ready response? —*Jos. Mazzini.*

THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF GOD

A consciousness of the intimate presence of God is necessary to the best work of which anyone is capable. When we discover one who works steadily, calmly and withal happily at his chosen or his appointed task we know one who at the centre of his being holds an unshaken faith in God; though we may not be privileged to penetrate the veil of fine reserve in which it is hidden. The stoic can be strong and brave, can do earnestly his unavoidable work, but he cannot do it joyously. Flippancy may be the refuge of the atheist, but it is as far from the serene joy of faith as is despair itself. A present God, not a far off Indifference, not an unpitying Law, not an unreasoning Chance, can give peace to the troubled soul, hope to the discouraged, strength to the fainting, and, in the last resort, enable the dying to confront the end of all things earthly with joyous confidence. The poised and balanced nature is stayed on God as a rocking stone upon its point of rest.

—*Emeline Harrington.*

We see no white-winged angels now. But yet men are led away from threatening destruction: a hand is put into theirs which leads them forth gently towards a calm and bright land, so that they look no more backward, and the hand may be a little child's. —*George Eliot.*

The tidal wave of deeper souls
Into our inmost being rolls,
And lifts us unawares
Out of all meaner cares.

—*Emerson.*

THE MISSIONARY SPIRIT

BY REV. CHARLES E. ST. JOHN

Of the First Unitarian Church, Philadelphia, Pa.

There are many missionaries who do not get full credit for being such for the reason that we live in a time when the missionary motive has been supposed to be confined to those whose missionary efforts are of one particular kind. The fact is that the missionary motive is nothing more or less than human sympathy. This motive has acted in those who have been earnest in working for every religion and every benevolent effort not specifically called religion. Animated by sympathy, people have always observed the lives of others; and, whenever any unusual or intense suffering has been found, help has been offered out of this impulse of sympathy,—this missionary desire to share what one has himself with those who have a pressing need of it.

In so far as we Unitarians recognize the underlying need of all souls, we are as eager as any of our brethren in the effort to enlighten people upon these great life subjects. We are eager to preach to them the Christian gospel of self-reliance, faith in God, and appreciation of life as an everlasting opportunity. Not salvation, but the immediate effect of imparting to people that which shall interpret their lives to them, make them glad that they are alive, and induce them to co-operate in the things that are eternal, is the object of our theological missionary endeavor.

It is true of Unitarians as it is of other Christians, therefore, that we recognize as man's greatest need his weaknesses and shortcomings in the things of the spirit, and recognize that our simple human sympathies impel us to bring to bear upon all men's lives our Christian doctrines, offering them to every man as the best treasures we have to give. Our intelligent grasp upon life

is our theology, our dearest possession; and this precious treasure we recognize as a thing which cannot be hoarded for one's self, but which must be shared with all who will accept it.

Unitarians do not understand themselves if they fail to uphold their claim to be primarily a missionary body, and none deeply understand the spirit of Jesus Christ who suppose that the universal impulse of sympathy is to be found at its height only among the adherents of a specified creed.

PRACTICAL RELIGION

There is one lesson that Americans may well learn from their too frequent discovery of corruption in business or politics, and that is, the need and value of a religion that is in touch with every-day life. One of the causes of the evils that beset us is undoubtedly to be found in false and misdirected religious teaching. For generations people have been taught that "the world" is the scene of moral degradation. The ecclesiastics have tried to make a "closed shop" of religion, so that they could have the monopoly of the business. Now it is the great privilege of Unitarians to combat that common and widespread abuse. It is our business to bring Christianity into the sphere of every-day concerns.

When Christian, in the "Pilgrim's Progress," found himself in the City of Destruction, he departed out of it as speedily as possible. There are still people who think that the way to lead a good life is to retreat from the ills and sins and battles of practical life into pious seclusion. Now Unitarians teach that that is moral cowardice and religious treason. The saint of the past fled from the world, but the saint of to-day is the man who

in use the world. He is the man of business who amid loose standards keeps his honor clean. He is the public servant who in shock of storm keeps his rudder true. To run away from the world is easy, to yield to its evil is easier; but to be in the world and mould it, that is the test of Christian character.

The idea that men can be driven into virtue or reached into integrity or scolded into good citizenship is moonshine. The idea that we can be washed or fed or housed or legislated into goodness is only partial truth. There is only one influence that has ever really succeeded in producing moral progress and reform, and that is the influence of practical religion. The present time is the best chance that God has ever given for the influence of the practical Christian life, and this land is the best land in which that chance can be met.

Forsooth, brothers, fellowship is heaven, and lack of fellowship is hell; fellowship is life, and lack of fellowship is death; and the deeds that we do upon the earth, it is for fellowship's sake that ye do them. —*William Morris.*

Every life is a profession of faith, and exercises an inevitable and silent propaganda.
—*H. F. Amiel.*

Much of our lives is spent in marring our own influence, and turning others' belief in us into a widely concluding unbelief, which they call knowledge of the world, while it is really disappointment in you or me.—*George Eliot.*

NOTES

The Secretary of the Association has just completed a missionary journey in the Northwest visiting Duluth, Winnipeg, Minneapolis and Chicago and points between. He has given especial attention to the interest of the Scandinavian missions in Minnesota and Manitoba.

The Secretary of the Department of Education, Rev. H. W. Foote, has also just returned from a missionary journey in Western Pennsylvania, Ohio and Michigan. He has visited a number of churches and attended two Conferences.

Two new church buildings have been dedicated this month, one at Duluth, Minn., and the other at West Somerville, Mass. Both are attractive and convenient church buildings.

The Directors of the Association have appointed Rev. William I. Lawrance, the President of the Sunday School Society, to be a lecturer on the Billings Foundation on the Pacific coast. Mr. Lawrance will visit the churches in that department in February and March.

The UNITARIAN CALENDAR is published monthly, except July and August, by the American Unitarian Association, at 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass. Single subscription, 25 cents a year. Club rate, five for $1.00.

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ENGLISH VERSION

Edited by Charles W. Wendte and V. D. Davis

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8vo.; 679 pp.; $2.00 net; by mail, $2.20

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